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HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE
FIRST STAMFORD (BAPTIST) CHURCH
AT
BANGALL, DUTCHESS COUNTY, N. Y.
BY
MR. EVELYN BRIGGS BALDWIN.

The First Stanford (Baptist) Church, at Bengall, Dutchess County, N. Y., Historical Sketch, Early Marriage Records and Abstracts of Tombstone Inscriptions. Prepared for the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, by Evelyn Briggs Baldwin.

In presenting herewith a historical sketch of the First Baptist Church of the town of Stanford (village of Bengall), Dutchess County, N. Y., I content myself by offering an abstract of a paper prepared by a member of the church as published in the proceedings of the 37th Anniversary of the Dutchess Baptist Association, held at Bengall, Aug. 30, and 31 and Sept. 1, 1871.

Abstract of Historical Sketch.

First records dated Great Nine Partners, Charlotte Precinct, N. Y.- First members appear to have emigrated from Massachusetts. The first record; dated 1755 reads thus:

Whereas there were a few of us, of the Baptist faith and order, settled in this wilderness as sheep having no Shepherd, being destitute of the glorious privileges which our dear Redeemer hath purchased for us, of having the gospel Preached among us and the ordinances administered under His law and solemn cause, we thought it needful to meet together and to give up ourselves to God by prayer and supplication, with continuance.

God was pleased to add unto us some more souls, which gives us great reason to hope God did own this our free-will offering, whereupon we continued assembling together till in the year 1759, on the 15th day of October. Then we were embodied together here in Dutchess County, and in the Province

of New York, and did make choice of two, viz. Ephraim Bullock and Comer Bullock to be as under shepherds, over us, to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances among us, which were established, and authorized, by the infinite goodness of God.

We had the presence and assistance of Elder Jabez Wood and Elder Robert Wheaton, who were Elders of the First Baptist Church in the town of Swansea, in the county of Bristol and in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in New England."

The next record, dated June 6, 1772, states that the Church chose two brethren to draw lots for one to serve as Deacon, which lot fell upon Richard Bullock, Jun. and he was duly authorized.

Then follows:- "Whereas the above said Church was authorized, and a considerable addition was made to it.

Just at this time we were informed that our mother church that established us, sang by rule Watts' Psalms, and we laboured with them for some time to forbear, but they continued and we withdrew ourselves from them. Then some time after that some of us grew uneasy because we had broken union with them about singing, viz. Richard Bullock and Ellis Bullock, and some time after Elder Comer Bullock grew so much uneasy, that we thought it our duty to make our recantation to that church for what we had done, believing that the Psalm, or tune, was not a sufficient thing to break union upon, but that every believer may sing according to his own understanding, and that it is agreeable to the gospel day. Some of the brethren made a request that they might sing Watts' Psalms, and were denied altogether.

Then we three above named made known our desire to the Church, that we wished to make a confession to the Swansea

church that we did wrong in withdrawing from them, which we must do for conscience sake, which gave great dissatisfaction to this church, who when they came to labour upon it, found they could not walk with us if we made our confession to them and allowed the singing of Watts' Psalms, which thing we find it our duty to do. So, then, we whose names are hereunder written (*here follows the names of twenty-four brethren and sisters) left assembling ourselves with them and remained void of meeting together for the worship of God, for some time: but having a conference, thought it duty to attend the worship of God as soon as there was a door open. Soon after there was a fervent call in the neighborhood which we readily accepted, and appointed a conference for those scattered members, who when we came together, found ourselves to be of one heart, and after several conferences thought it our duty to give up ourselves to God and each other as follow members to walk together in visible communion, which we entered into on this 9th day of May, in the year 1778, and then follow the names of twenty-four more, as being willing to walk together in the Order of the Gospel, with singing of Psalms and Hymns as a part of Divine worship.

Oct. 17, 1779, a letter of invitation was received by the church from Kinderhook, saying the greatly desired this church to send their under shepherd to preach the gospel and to administer the ordinance of baptism; after perusal of the letter the church appointed Elder Comer Bullock and Bro. George Crandall to act in fellowship and report the same to the church.

These messengers reported as follows: Nov. 2nd,

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arrived at Bro. Wm. Hares, and found there that evening three persons whom the Lord had wrought upon by this spirit, and other spectators. Nov. 3rd, held Divine Service at Bro. Wm. Hares and one person was baptized. Nov. 4th, service was held at Bro. Henry Joslin's. Nov. 7th, service held at Wm. Hares and one brother and four sisters dedicated themselves to the Lord. After these meetings they were established by the authority of the church as a branch of this church. Thus ended the first missionary tour of seven days by this church.

Nov. 27th, the church appointed a conference to be held at the house of Elder Comer Bullock, every Saturday and that a like due attendance should be given to the Church Meetings on the last Saturday in every month, which hath hitherto been too much neglected.

March 5th 1780, the church received another request to send the Elder and a brother to Kinderhook to administer the ordinance of baptism, whereupon Ellis Bullock was chosen by lot to accompany the Pastor. These setting out upon their journey March 7th arrived at their destination the following day, where they did preach the gospel of Christ, after which several candidates were baptized and received into full fellowship.

April 1st, the Church met at the house of Elder Bullock, when one of the brethren called upon the Elder to bring in the late necessary charges which proved to be in money six pounds, eight shillings, likewise the messengers expended six working days of man and horse, and four dollars, paid by the Elder for paper, it being for the necessary use of the church. At this time two of the brethren had (as they said) made a new discovery, viz. that there should be an equality

in the church in the payment of the expenses. April 28th the church being assembled at the house of the Pastor one of the brethren explained his new discovery of duty as follows: To plough, plant and hoe the Elder's corn, mow and secure his hay, plough and prepare the fallow ground for sowing wheat for him, judging it most convenient for us, in our low circumstances, to redeem what time we can in order that the Elder might dedicate to the Lord all such redeemed time in work pertaining to his ministerial functions.

Sept. 1780, the brethren at Dover and adjacent places requested that Elder Bullock and the messengers of the church should visit them. Accordingly they visited those quarters and preached the gospel and baptized Samuel Hunt, Hezekiah Lockwood, John Furman, Abijah Frost, Sarah Palmer, Ruth Lockwood, and Jemima Furman.

Nov. 3, 1781, a conference being held at Kinderhook, the Elder preached at Bro. Wm. Hares and on the next day baptized and received three persons into the church. Then the Elder preached in other places, journeying as far as Bethlehem and returned to the Branch on the 7th.

On Nov. 8, 1781, a conference was held at Stephentown, at Esq. Colvers, where they were met by Elder Drake and some of his brethren.

June 29, 1782, the elder received six into the church at Little Hoosic.

Oct. 28, 1786, the Elder reported that on the 8th of Oct. he had received ten persons into the church, and on the 21st three more, showing an increase of Pastoral labor at Kinderhook. In 1789 there were in the last nine months con-

stant accessions.

Oct. 29, 1787 an invitation was received from the neighborhood of Daniel Jones (just east of Mabbettsville) for the Elder to come and baptize. The church appointed the Elder, and by his request, some brethren to go with him and hear their experiences. Nearly forty of them were baptized, and by their request they were, April 26th, 1788, constituted a branch of this church.

A branch is also spoken of as near Jacob Lawrence's and two brethren were chosen as overseers of it. May 31st, brethren at Noble Town requested the Pastor to administer the ordinance of baptism.

Dec. 22nd a council was called and Nathan Canfield and James Purdy were ordained as deacons, Elders Dakins, Cano, and Bullock officiating.

January 17, 1789 eleven candidates were baptized at Little Nine Partners, Jan. 31st Deacon Canfield expressed a dissatisfaction that the church consisted of so many branches that the mother church was destitute of preaching the greater part of the time.

June 1st, 1789, the branch at Kinderhook was constituted a gospel church, numbering thirty members. Book 2nd, 1790, contains their Articles of Faith in full.

In June 1790 some candidates residing at a place called Hudson sent a messenger to the church asking them to send their Elder to administer the ordinance of baptism.

Aug. 26, 1791, being the first day of the week a great number of people were gathered together, and two were baptized and added to the church. The Elder preached from

the words: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

Dec. 29, 1790, Deacon Canfield requested the brethren to consider the Elder in his needful circumstances in respect to bread and wood, when the church agreed to relieve his wants.

This was just in view of the fact that he had fed many and provided fuel for the people to be comfortable so many winters when assembled at his house. It is not a matter of record that he ever received a penny as a salary. He did on one occasion receive a contribution and, for so doing, was called an hireling, whereupon the church very promptly voted that he had a perfect right to receive any contributions the people were disposed to make him.

On Aug. 26, 1790 the church voted that the Elder and Bro. Adams, a licentiate, should attend a meeting at Oswago, at the house of Bro. Fowler, or near, once every month and so continue for twelve months.

In April the church voted that the Elder should preach for them three Sabbaths in the month for one year, the 4th Sabbath at the village and to the branch near David Jones*; when there were five Sabbaths he might have liberty to go where he should think best. At the yearly meeting a Bro. Freeman was sent to them from Kinderhook with a request that they would hear him improve his gift, and, after hearing, report in writing what they considered his gift to be, which they thought to be exhortation. This shows a confidence in the ability of the church to judge. In 1798 a messenger (Bro. Scott) presented a request from candidates in Rhinebeck,

wishing Baptism, for the church to send an administrator. Therefore the church voted to send for Elder Hopkins to come and go with them to Rhinebeck the third Sabbath in May. May 19th Elder Bullock, Elder Hopkins and Dea. Canfield met at the house of Bro. Robert Scott at Rhinebeck Flats, and heard the experience of four candidates, and on Lord's Day, one more. Then Elder Hopkins preached and baptized them, which was done by order of the church. July 21st, Elder Bullock baptized three more.

In 1799 a proposition was made to have a stove in the Meeting House but it was voted down. Nearly all the meetings were held at the Pastor's house, especially in cold weather. The dwelling house then owned by the Elder, rebuilt about 1870 or earlier is still standing and is located about three miles north of the present house of worship in Bangall.

Nov. 9th, 1800 a request was made of the church that Elder Bullock should preach at the house of Bro. John Wiley once a month. This was granted.

In 1802 there were some baptisms by Elder Hopkins. Still the meetings were held at Elder Bullock's house, he presiding as moderator. The last record pertaining to this faithful man is that he presided at a church meeting in his own house, Feb. 29, 1804.

The church on May 29, 1802, presented a call to Elder Hopkins to preach for them three months half of the time, and voted to give him twenty shillings a Sabbath. Elder Petit is spoken of as having served as a supply several months and baptized some. Elder Arnold is also referred to as a "supply". Up to this date the church at Bangall had establish-

ed eight different branches, viz., Kinderhook, Oswago, Noble Town, Dover, Daniel Jones', West Branch, South West Branch and Rhinebeck.

The first record of Elder Luman Burch is that he closed a church meeting by prayer Feb. 23rd, 1805. On August 30th the church proposed his ordination, but this he declined. On June 14, 1806, a council consisting of Elders Leland, Wood, and Johnson was convened and on the next day Bro. Luman Burch was ordained. Elder Johnson preaching the sermon. This occurred in a grove where the first meeting-house stood and at the same time, Comer, a son of Elder Comer Bullock was ordained a deacon. At the close of these services Elder Leland baptized Johiel Canfield and Abraham Hicks.

Among the first baptized by Elder Burch were Sammel Sackett, and Asa Thompson who became a deacon and was a pillar of the church for nearly fifty years. Thus Elder Burch began his labors and most of his life as minister of the Gospel was spent here.

In July 1814, a new house was raised and in August 1815 the church met there. It was located about a quarter of a mile south of the first.

One year, probably in 1821, Elder Burch preached at Amenia, the same year in which Elder Doty preached at Bangall. Some difficulty arising in regard to the singing, Elder Burch asked for a letter of dismissal. This was granted but afterwards repealed with the specification that no reflection should be cast from the desk. In Nov. 1821, Elder Doty asked for a letter of dismission, the request being granted.

Elder Burch preached a part of the time at Fishkill

and at Bangall only half of the time, probably about three years, as this is not fully explained in the records. He also preached frequently at Pleasant Valley, where, as well as in Fishkill, he was greatly loved. He also preached at Pine Plains, the first record of which, is June 7th 1835, when he baptized eight converts, and on the 18th seven more. The church then voted to hold a regular meeting at the Plains every second Saturday in the month. Nov. 14th, he baptized four more, when Bro. Cornelius Husted in behalf of himself and others requested the church to permit Elder Burch to preach for them one Sabbath in each month for the ensuing year. The request was granted and in 1839 they were constituted a regular Baptist Church.

In the first week of June 1842 a great revival began, meetings being held daily for about five weeks, and about forty members were added to the church, many being in the vigor of life. Elders Isaac Bevan, Nathan D. Benedict and F. G. Ambler then pastor of the 1st Fishkill church, were the laborers in that meeting. Rev. Silas Ambler, who united with this church by letter from the Norfolk church, also labored in that meeting. He died Nov. 23, 1857, aged 57 years. Soon after this revival the meeting-house was repaired and painted, and a steeple built. Dec. 31, 1842, David Van Bradenburgh was baptized. Subsequently he was licensed to preach.

Elder Burch labored in this community a number of years and by industry and economy secured a small farm, this in a great measure supporting himself. His salary was small and foreseeing that his successor would have but scanty support and feeling that he himself was responsible for not having

educated the church to give more liberally for the pastor's support, he proposed to the church, June 26, 1852, to raise the sum of \$1000 to build a parsonage, drew up a subscription for the same and headed the list with his own name for \$100. The money was raised and the parsonage built. He was a worthy successor to the former pastor. The two were the only pastors from 1755 to 1855, in which latter year Elder Burch closed his labors as pastor, having been stricken with palsy. He lingered a sufferer until Nov. 17th, 1858, when he died, aged 81 years.

June 30, 1855 Elder Elijah Lucas was extended and accepted a call as pastor of the church, and on the 23rd of September entered upon his pastorate with the church. On Nov. 21st he was ordained as a minister. The sermon on this occasion was preached by Elder Joshua Fletcher of Amenia. On Dec. 26, a goodly number were baptized and added to the church.

Jan. 1st, 1860, at a regular meeting of the church Bro. P. K. Sackett, in behalf of the following members, viz: P. K. Sackett, I. I. Wright, Chapel Robinson and others asked for letters to form another Baptist Church in the town of Stanford, whereupon the church appointed a special meeting two weeks from that date, to consider the request, which being refused Bro. P. K. Sackett said that they would withdraw from the church. While these events were transpiring Bro. John Vassar came among the people and labored for the spiritual good of the church and community. After Elder Lucas left Bro. Vassar moved his family into the parsonage and remained several months. His labors were greatly appreciated.

Oct. 29, 1859, Elder J. Holmans appears as Moderator in the church meetings. He continued with the church as a supply until in March 1860, when he was unanimously elected pastor. In 1865 Elder Holmans tendered his resignation as pastor, and on Jan. 1, 1866 it was accepted. In April Elder W. C. Ambler became the pastor of the church. In 1868 about thirty were added to the church.

The second house of worship stood about one fourth of a mile south of the first house and was occupied for about fifty-three years. In it the Dutchess Baptist Association was organized and at its first meeting in 1835, Rev. W. Winter was Moderator.

In the fall of 1867 a survey was made for the Dutchess and Columbia Rail Road which passed through the pulpit. The house was therefore moved a little more than the width of it to give way for the work of the road. In December the Railroad gave the church \$1650 damages, the trustees of the church accepting a proposition of the agents of the road, to that effect. The present house of worship was then erected. It is located about one fourth of a mile south of the second, and cost \$12,000.

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